

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the above-identified Application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claims 1–3, 5, 7–11, 13–17, and 20–22 are amended. Claims 24–63 are added. Claims 1–63 are pending in the Application.

**Restriction Requirement**

In the Office Action mailed August 6, 2003, the Examiner required restriction of Group I (claims 1–16, 18, 22, and 23) from Groups II and III (claims 17 and 19–21), stating that the groups are distinct because “the product [of Group I] can be used in a materially different process, such as an electron beam exposure process.”

In response, applicants respectfully traversed the Restriction requirement, noting that at least some of the claims of Group I also encompass use of such an exposure process. In the pending Office Action, the Examiner rejects this argument, stating that “limitations disclosed in the specification are not read into the claims.”

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration. Applicant does not invite reading any limitation into any claim. Indeed, if the Examiner truly believes that any claim of Group I does not encompass use of an electron beam exposure process (which is again expressly disclosed in the specification at e.g. paragraph [0003]), then applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner indicate how such claims are so limited as to not encompass such use. Otherwise, applicant respectfully submits that the proposed distinction does not actually exist and respectfully requests examination of all pending claims.

**Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102**

Claims 1–16, 18, 22, and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Tzu (U.S. Patent No. 6,001,512). At least for the following reasons, applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 14, and 22 recite a plurality of isolated areas that contrast with a background and represent features to be printed, said isolated areas being arranged in an array such that at least part of each isolated area is adjacent to at least part of at least one other isolated area in the array. Claims 1 and 14 also recite a plurality of assist features smaller than said isolated areas and positioned so as to make an aerial image of said array more symmetric.

As noted by the Examiner, Tzu teaches an array of sub-resolution contact holes (e.g. col. 3, ll. 18–22). However, Tzu explicitly states that these holes are “too small to be resolved when the pattern is projected onto the wafer” (col. 2, ll. 12–14). Therefore, Tzu does not teach or suggest an array of isolated areas that represent features to be printed, as recited in claims 1, 14, and 22.

Applicant respectfully submits that claims 2–13, 15–21, and 23 are also allowable for at least the reasons set forth above.

#### **New claims**

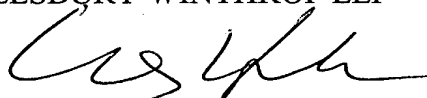
Claims 24–63 are new. Each of these claims is supported by, for example, one or more of the claims, one or more of the figures, paragraph [0013], and/or paragraph [0061] of the application as originally filed.

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Please charge any fees associated with the submission of this paper to Deposit Account Number 033975. The Commissioner for Patents is also authorized to credit any over payments to the above-referenced Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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